

Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2010

Statement on the Extension of Benefits to Same-Sex Domestic Partners of Federal Employees

June 2, 2010

Last year, I issued a Presidential memorandum that instructed the Office of Personnel Management and the Secretary of State to extend certain available benefits they had identified to gay and lesbian Federal employees and their families under their respective jurisdictions. Among those benefits were long-term care insurance and expanded sick leave for civil service employees and medical care abroad, eligibility for employment at posts, cost-of-living adjustments abroad and medical evacuation for domestic partners of foreign service members. In that same memorandum, I called upon the Federal agencies to undertake a comprehensive review and to identify any additional benefits that could be extended to the same-sex domestic partners of Federal employees under existing law. That process has now concluded, and I am proud to announce that earlier today, I signed a memorandum that requires executive agencies to take immediate action to extend to the same-sex domestic partners of Federal employees a number of meaningful benefits, from family assistance services to hardship transfers to relocation expenses. It also requires agencies that extend any new benefits to employees' opposite-sex spouses to make those benefits available on equal terms to employees' same-sex domestic partners to the extent permitted by law.

While this memorandum is an important step on the path to equality, my administration continues to be prevented by existing Federal law from providing same-sex domestic partners with the full range of benefits enjoyed by heterosexual married couples. That is why today I renew my call for swift passage of an important piece of legislation pending in both Houses of Congress, the "Domestic Partnership Benefits and Obligations Act." This legislation, championed by Senators Joe Lieberman and Susan Collins and Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin, would extend to the same-sex domestic partners of Federal employees the full range of benefits currently enjoyed by Federal employees' opposite-sex spouses. I look forward to signing it into law.

Categories: Statements by the President : Same-sex domestic partners of Federal employees, extension of benefits.

Names: Baldwin, Tammy; Collins, Susan M.; Lieberman, Joseph I.

Subjects: Civil rights : Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons, equality; Government organization and employees : Same-sex domestic partnerships, employee family benefits; Legislation, proposed : "Domestic Partnership Benefits and Obligations Act of 2009".

DCPD Number: DCPD201000449.